



For Immediate Release  
September 8, 2008  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

## *New Imam Ali Bridge unites sister cities*

By Alicia Embrey  
Gulf Region South District



Iraq's Minister of Housing and Construction Beyan Ismail Dezei spoke at the ribbon cutting of the new Imam Ali Bridge Aug. 28, 2008, that now offers residents in Najaf and Kufa an easy way to cross the Euphrates River. (USACE photo)

**KUFA, Iraq** –During the August 28 opening ceremony of a new bridge south of Baghdad, Iraq's vice president said the \$6.5 million project shows the Iraqi government's commitment to improving people's lives in poorer areas that were ignored by the former regime.

"Projects such as the new Imam Ali Bridge will help generate economic improvement," Adil Abdal-Mahdi said. Included in the project are sidewalks, railings, approach lighting systems, along

with a paved area on each side of the bridge for fire truck access to the river.

The bridge will provide a safe and reliable crossing across the Euphrates River connecting the sister cities of Kufa and Najaf, a vital component for commerce and transportation in that region, said Dr. Ameer, the Iraqi deputy Resident Engineer with the Gulf Region Division.

"Local residents are very appreciative," he said. "The 350-meter multi-span concrete bridge replaces a pontoon bridge



Local residents and Iraqi government officials celebrated the opening of a bridge Aug. 28, 2008, uniting the cities of Najaf and Kufa, south of Baghdad. Among those officials attending was Iraq Vice President Adil Abdal-Mahdi who said the project shows the government's commitment to improve people's lives. (USACE photo)

and should help alleviate some of the traffic jams, especially during the religious season."

Imam Ali shrine in Najaf and the Kufa mosque are two of Shiite Islam's holiest sites. During the religious season, the new bridge now allows pilgrims and general traffic to bypass the congested market area in downtown Kufa. "This bridge is a great addition to the area." said Vice President Abdal-Mahdi.



**Note:** Alicia Embrey is a Public Affairs Specialist with the Gulf Region South district, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Iraq. For more information, contact public affairs by phone at 540 665-1233, by e-mail to [CEGRD.PAO@tac01.usace.army.mil](mailto:CEGRD.PAO@tac01.usace.army.mil), or visit [www.grd.usace.army.mil](http://www.grd.usace.army.mil).